News Release
Communiqué

Ontario

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Ministère de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée

For Immediate Release
January 31, 2007
2007/nr-012

MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT SUPPORTS EXPANSION OF UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA HEART INSTITUTE

$8.3 Million Capital Investment To Increase Capacity To Deliver Cardiac Care

OTTAWA - The McGuinty government is investing $8.3 million to support planning and redevelopment at the University of Ottawa Heart Institute (UOHI) to further increase its capacity to deliver quality care for patients, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

"Our government is working to help ensure Ottawa-area patients who need cardiac services get the quality care they need closer to home," said Smitherman. "This funding represents a very promising first step towards a modern new facility that will provide greater access to care for local residents."

Today's announcement consists of a $4 million grant to go towards advance planning of the redevelopment of the Cardiac Life Support Services project. The project calls for the relocation and expansion of UOHI's Cardiac Life Support Services from its current location in the basement of the Heart Institute Building to a larger new facility on the Civic campus of The Ottawa Hospital.

The government is also providing an additional $4.3 million for infrastructure improvements to maintain UOHI's current location until the redevelopment is completed, bringing today's total investment to $8.3 million.

In its redevelopment plans the Heart Institute is proposing to add a new surgical suite, additional catheterization and electrophysiology laboratories and 12 surgical intensive care beds, all of which will help reduce wait times for cardiac patients.

"The cardiac care, education and research that we provide are essential to Ottawa-area residents and the citizens of Ontario," said University of Ottawa Heart Institute, President and CEO Dr. Robert Roberts. "This funding will help us lay the groundwork for the future expansion of the Heart Institute to meet the demands we face."

The UOHI is the provider of advanced cardiac services for the Champlain Local Health Integration Network as well as national and international communities. It offers four cardiac surgical suites, five laboratories, a 16-bed surgical intensive care unit and related support services.

This is just the latest example of how the McGuinty government is on the side of the residents of Ottawa when it comes to providing quality hospital care. Other initiatives include:

- Increasing operating grant funding to hospitals to $12.9 billion in 2006/07, growing to $14 billion in 2008/09

- Reducing wait times for five key health care services (hip and knee joint replacement, cataract surgeries, MRI exams, cancer surgeries and cardiac procedures) with a recent investment of $222.5 million
- Providing a total of $41 million in capital funding to hospitals to repair and upgrade their facilities.

Today's initiative is part of the McGuinty government's plan for innovation in public health care, building a system that delivers on three priorities - keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses

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